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# **TO ARMS!**

**SONGS OF THE GREAT WAR**



# TO ARMS!

## SONGS OF THE GREAT WAR

BY

Laura E. Richards

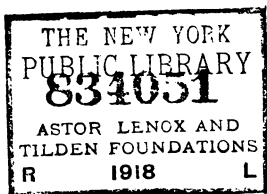
OF THE VIGILANTES

Author of "Captain January," "Melody,"  
"Queen Hildegarde," "Five-Minute Stories," etc.



BOSTON  
THE PAGE COMPANY  
MDCCCCXVIII





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**First Impression, December, 1917**

NOV 1918  
CLUB  
YRATL

**THE COLONIAL PRESS**  
**C. H. SIMONDS CO., BOSTON, U. S. A.**

TO MY SON  
**John**  
"SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE"

1347 12/11/11  
(11)

## TO MY BROTHER AND SISTERS

*(On hearing the Battle Hymn of the Republic sung by  
a great company.)*

*Our mother's words, the country through,  
By young and old are sung today;  
Like stars, they light the war's wild night,  
Like flowers, they strew the world's dim way.*

*And thankful hearts her children lift,  
To hear her trumpet sounding clear;  
Sweet-silver as the silver voice  
Which now our ears alone may hear.*

*Oh! may the land she held so dear  
Grow day by day more valiant-wise,  
Tune to her note its bugle clear,  
And read God's glory through her eyes.*

*And, dear ones, as we follow, too,  
Along the path she leaves so bright,  
Some bud of service may we strew,  
Let fall some spark of helpful light!*

*May 27, 1917.*

# CONTENTS

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	PAGE
GIVE US A CHANCE! . . . .	1
COME TO THE COLORS . . . .	4
THE TRANSPORTS . . . .	5
THE WOMAN'S BURDEN . . . .	7
TO OUR ALLIES . . . .	9
LIBERTY'S DRUM . . . .	11
THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS. NUMBER ONE	13
THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS. NUMBER TWO	15
TWO JOHNNIES . . . .	17
ROOKIE'S SONG . . . .	19
MAKING GOOD . . . .	21
YANKEE DOODLE'S DRUM . . . .	25
THE TRENCHES . . . .	27
OUR MOURNING . . . .	30
THE WAR MOTHER ON CHRISTMAS EVE .	32
HELP! . . . .	35
THE RED CROSS . . . .	37

**“ Ride, Vigilantes! ride!”**

**EDITH M. THOMAS.**

# TO ARMS!

## SONGS OF THE GREAT WAR

---

GIVE US A CHANCE!

*A Song for Young Jonathan.*  
May, 1917.

STEADFAST and strong is the Tommy of England,  
land,

Gallant and gay is the Poilu of France:  
We've been asleep, but thank God, we're awake  
now!

Frenchmen and Englishmen, give us a chance!

*Give us a chance! we stand for the right, too!*  
*Give us a chance! we know how to fight, too!*  
*Brothers of England and comrades of France,*  
*Give us a chance!*

None of our women have perished in torture,  
Where the shells scream and the bayonets  
glance;

## GIVE US A CHANCE!

None of our children have Death for their  
nurture:

Belgians and Serbians, give us a chance!

*Give us a chance! we've sweethearts and wives,  
too!*

*Give us a chance! for the little ones' lives, too!*

*Now, as we rouse from security's trance,*

*Give us a chance!*

Fair stand our homes in their spring-flushing  
meadows,

Hands all around for the daffodil-dance!

In the wrecked lands where the death-pall o'er-  
shadows,

Poles and Armenians, give us a chance!

*Give us a chance! our strength shall uphold  
you!*

*Give us a chance! our love shall enfold you!*

*Stretch out your faint hands to greet our ad-  
vance!*

*Give us a chance!*

## GIVE US A CHANCE!

Up with the Flag, then! Too long has it slumbered,

Furled round the Past in its dream of romance;

Blaze every stripe, every bright star be numbered!

Freedom and Brotherhood, give us a chance!

*Give us a chance! we stand for the right, too!*

*Give us a chance! we're in for the fight, too!*

*Over, and over, and over to France!*

*Give us a chance!*



## COME TO THE COLORS!

*Air, Russian Hymn.*

Sons of America, come to the colors,  
Gather in arms round the Red, White and Blue!  
Far over land and sea a bugle note is ringing;  
Sons of America, it sounds for you!

Long have ye stood apart, the conflict grim  
    beholding,  
Safe in your distance and calm in your might;  
Now, in the hour of need, your banner proud  
    unfolding,  
Sons of America, uphold the right!

Kingdoms may pass away in tumult resounding,  
Thrones and dominions may crumble and fall;  
Now, while Humanity the great *Advance* is  
    sounding,  
Sons of America, obey the call!

## THE TRANSPORTS

Out into the night they slip,  
Silent ship by silent ship,  
    Dim and gray, dim and gray;  
And the fog droops low to hide them,  
And the wind springs swift to guide them  
    On their way, on their way.

Soft, ah, soft, the ripples lisp,  
Break the bubbles, silver-crisp,  
    'Neath the bow, 'neath the bow;  
Swirls the snowy wake behind them;  
So we lose them; who shall find them,  
    Ask not now! Ask not now!

What the freighting that they bear?  
Gold or pearl or jewels rare,  
    Over seas, over seas?

## THE TRANSPORTS

Yea! the Jewels of a Nation!  
Yea! a People's consecration  
Goes with these, goes with these!

Mother's boy and maiden's lover,  
Husband, father, — over, over,  
Tell the tale, tell the tale!  
Heart of gold and soul of fire,  
Lifted eyes of high desire,  
So they sail, so they sail.

Out into the night they slip,  
Silent ship by silent ship,  
Dim and gray, dim and gray.  
God's own angels fly beside them,  
God's own good and grace betide them  
On their way, on their way!

## THE WOMAN'S BURDEN

(On being asked, "What is Woman's Part in the World War?")

Rise up, mother, sister, daughter,  
Tender maiden, faithful wife;  
Rise, and take upon your shoulder  
Woman's burden in the Strife!

Take the burden of a smile,  
When it hurts to bring it;  
Take the burden of a song,  
When it wounds to sing it!  
Smile and sing and cheer them on,  
Husband, father, brother, son,  
To the starry splendor  
Of their high surrender.

Roseleaf girls, the summer's blossoms,  
Stately matrons, jewel-bright,

## THE WOMAN'S BURDEN

Labor's strong and valiant daughters,  
Hand in hand to join the Fight!

Shed no tear to dim the steel  
That must gleam so brightly!  
Make no moan to check the breath  
That must come so lightly!  
Smile and sing, and each to each  
Cheerful tasks and holy teach;  
Others' wounds upbinding,  
So your own balm finding.

Rise up, mother, sister, daughter,  
Tender maiden, faithful wife;  
Rise and run to lift and bear it,  
Woman's burden in the Strife!

## TO OUR ALLIES

**HANDS across the sea, brothers!**

**Hands across the sea!**

**Here's a flag to fly with yours,**

**The emblem of the free.**

**Holy hands of freemen gave it,**

**Heart and life we pledge to save it,**

**At your side we lift and wave it,**

**Now for Liberty!**

**Hands across the sea, brothers!**

**Hands across the sea!**

**Here's a sword to draw with yours,**

**'Gainst monstrous tyranny.**

**Valiant hearts have beat beneath it,**

**Deathless laurels still enwreath it,**

**Sadly, sternly, we unsheathe it,**

**Now for Liberty.**

## TO OUR ALLIES

**Hands around the world, brothers!**

**Hands around the world!**

**Fling the married colors out,**

**Never to be furled,**

**Till the power of Light prevailing,**

**Vict'ry's height in triumph scaling,**

**Sees the power of Darkness failing,**

**Down in ruin hurled.**

## **LIBERTY'S DRUM**

**MEN** of America, young and old,  
Stripling and graybeard, blithe and bold,  
Now come! now come!

The clouds above us darken, darken,  
While in the distance — harken, harken!

The roll of Liberty's drum!

Hurrah!

The roll of Liberty's drum!

Prudence now and pacifist reason,  
Patience now with fraud and treason

Are dumb, are dumb!

Hark! do you hear it? Nearer, nearer,  
Louder ever and clearer, clearer,

The roll of Liberty's drum!

Hurrah!

The roll of Liberty's drum!



## **LIBERTY'S DRUM**

**From northern pine, from southern palm,**

**From eastern storm, from western calm,**

**Now come! now come!**

**From peak and plain, from hill and hollow,**

**Rise now and follow, follow, follow,**

**The roll of Liberty's drum!**

**Hurrah!**

**The roll of Liberty's drum!**

## THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS

### Number One.

THE little brown tents are standing thick  
All over the autumn plain ;  
The bugle calls are sounding quick,  
And Tom and Jim and Harry and Dick  
Are hurrying out amain.

But oh! but oh!  
Where is my lad, d'ye know?  
It's off to the Camp my lad was sent ;  
He's somewhere there in a little brown tent.

The little brown tents are neat and trim,  
With fixtures all complete,  
There's never a spot that's dull or dim,  
And if there were, there's a sergeant grim  
On hand with a special treat.

But oh! but oh!  
Now which is the way to go?

## THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS

It's off to the Camp my lad was sent;  
He's somewhere there in a little brown tent.

The little brown tents hold everything  
That a soldier boy needs, d'ye see!  
But now and again they help themselves  
To other folks' things, the wanton eves,  
And that's what has chanced to me.

For oh! for oh!

It's this is the truth, you know:  
When off to the Camp my lad was sent,  
He took my heart to his little brown tent!

## THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS

Number Two.

Oh, what have you got in your little brown tents,

Yankee Doodle, Yankee Doodle?

Oh, what have you got in your little brown tents,

Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh?

Oh, I've got quite a lot of my jolly brown boys,

They're feeling rather fit and they're making quite a noise,

And I think that Kaiser Bill-i-am it very much annoys.

Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!

Oh, what are they doing in the little brown tents,

Yankee Doodle, Yankee Doodle?

Oh, what are they doing in the little brown tents,

Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh?

## THE LITTLE BROWN TENTS

They are learning how to shoot, they are learn-  
ing how to fly,  
To dig very deep and to mount very high,  
And I think that Kaiser Bill-i-am will learn the  
reason why,  
Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!

And where are they going from the little brown  
tents,  
Yankee Doodle, Yankee Doodle?  
And where are they going from the little brown  
tents,  
Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh?  
They are going for to sail o'er the wide, rolling  
sea,  
And in the field of France they will fight for  
liberty,  
And I think that Kaiser Bill-i-am — oh, well,  
we'll wait and see!  
Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!

## TWO JOHNNIES

Your father's name was Johnny Reb,  
And mine was Johnny Yank ;  
They popped at each other with might and main  
With cartridges far from blank.  
But shoulder to shoulder you and I  
Will now be having some fun,  
For Johnny the Yank and Johnny the Reb  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hip! hip!  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hoo-ray!  
Are going to fight the Hun!

My father wore a coat of blue,  
And yours a coat of gray ;  
And little they thought that sons of theirs  
Would be dressing alike today.  
But khaki to khaki you and I  
Step out with our shouldered gun,

## TWO JOHNNIES

For Johnny the Yank and Johnny the Reb  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hip! hip!  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hoo-ray!  
Are going to fight the Hun!

There's one bright flag above our heads, —  
Salute it with a cheer!  
There's one firm purpose in our hearts,  
Fair Freedom's way to clear.  
Then over the sea, and over the sea,  
And back when the war is done,  
For Johnny the Yank and Johnny the Reb  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hip! hip!  
Are going to fight the Hun,  
Hoo-ray!  
Are going to fight the Hun!  
So long!  
Are going to fight the Hun!

## ROOKIE'S SONG

*Air, "Everybody Works but Father."*

EVERYBODY's wearing khaki!

Nothing else the style:

Sets the old folks cheering,

Makes the young folks smile:

When they see us coming,

All the children run;

Everybody's wearing khaki

Except — the — Hun!

The gray old badger!

Look across the water!

Same thing over there:

Khaki moles in the trenches,

Khaki birds in the air.

E'en the smoke-clouds rolling

Dusky 'gainst the sun:



## THE ROOKIE'S SONG

Everybody's wearing khaki  
Except — the — Hun!  
The gray old buzzard!

Good-by now, my sweetheart!  
So long, Uncle S. !  
Me for the War's duration,  
Never a second less :  
When we're homeward steering,  
After the fight is done,  
Everybody will be cheering,  
Except — the — Hun !  
The gray old rascal !

## MAKING GOOD

A BIRTHDAY MEDITATION OF WILLIAM JONES,  
CARPENTER

SOME years ago, this very day,  
Two little kids were born :  
One in the royal purple,  
One in a blanket worn.  
One with a golden spoon, like,  
One with a spoon of wood :  
But both of 'em sent with the same intent :  
“ My son, make good ! ”

*For the one good God  
From the one good sod  
He made us, flesh and bones :  
You, William Hohenzollern,  
And me, Bill Jones.*

I've had a pretty tough time,  
And little else beside :

## MAKING GOOD

It surely was a rough time  
When wife and baby died.  
But still I held my end up:  
I always understood  
The thing to do, for me and you,  
Was just — make good!

But even at the hardest,  
I've loved the light o' day:  
I've loved to see a child's face,  
I've loved to earn my pay.  
I've never lied nor cheated:  
I always understood  
That warn't the style to go a mile  
Towards makin' good.

And while I've scratched and sweated  
To earn my crust of bread,  
You've sat upon a throne, like,  
A crown upon your head.  
And judgin' from your picture,  
I've always understood

## MAKING GOOD

That certain true you thought that *you*  
Had made *darned* good!

I often think of you, sir,  
And wonder how 'twould feel  
To set a hull great Nation  
A-writhin' 'neath my heel.  
I never trompled on a worm:  
I vum, I never could!  
'Twarn't my idee that that, d'ye see,  
Would just — make good.

I often think of you, sir,  
And wonder how 'twould seem  
If little ghosts of murdered kids  
Should haunt my every dream.  
My baby died upon my arm —  
I done the best I could —  
He kep' a-smilin' to the last —  
God! *he* made good!

We're gettin' on in years, like:  
Rheumatic? So be I!

## MAKING GOOD

The day will come, my birthday mate,  
When you and me must die.  
Somehow I can't but wonder,  
For all your Kaiserhood,  
Which of the two, of me and you,  
Will make most good,

*When the one good God  
To the one good sod  
Gives back our flesh and bones,  
Yours, William Hohenzollern,  
And mine, Bill Jones!*

## YANKEE DOODLE'S DRUM

A Song of Enlistment.

VIRGINIA rocked our cradle,  
New England was our nurse;  
We cut our teeth upon Plymouth Rock,  
And never a whit the worse.

We're marching, marching,  
To Yankee Doodle's drum.  
From Maine to Ohio,  
It's up and be spry, oh,  
And come! come! come!

It's down from the shaggy mountain,  
It's up from the golden plain:  
From blue Atlantic surges,  
From far Pacific main;

## YANKEE DOODLE'S DRUM

We're marching, marching,  
To Yankee Doodle's drum.  
Manhattan to Frisco,  
It's up and be brisk, oh!  
And come! come! come!

We came across in a cockboat,  
To Massachusetts Bay,  
But we'll go back in a fleet, boys,  
While Liberty leads the way!

We're marching, marching,  
To Yankee Doodle's drum.  
From ocean to ocean,  
Get on to the notion,  
And come! come! come!

## THE TRENCHES

(December, 1916.)

It's cold, it's cold in the trenches,  
And the snow falls white and drear:  
It's bitter cold in the trenches  
At this time o' the year.  
Like iron chill is the brown earth wall,  
The snowflakes sting as they freeze and fall,  
And the shells go screeching over all,  
A dismal sound to hear.

My boy will sleep in his bed tonight,  
A pillow under his head;  
My boy, God bless him, will sleep tonight  
With never a thought of dread.\*

\* This is no longer true. He is now in France with his mates.



## THE TRENCHES

But what of the boys who crouch and peer,  
With little to hope and all to fear,  
And hark for the quick hiss on the ear,  
And the sharp sting of the lead!

Oh, yes, there are beds in the trenches,  
When one's turn comes to sleep;  
There are dripping cots in the trenches  
Where a weary lad may creep.  
But many a one will drop where he stood  
Ankle deep in the freezing mud,  
And the pool at his head may be rain or blood  
No care will he keep.

And there's plenty to eat in the trenches;  
The bread will be soaked, maybe:  
And there's something queer got into the soup,  
And a good deal of smoke in the tea:  
But so long as it's hot, and something to drink,  
It's all "to the merry," they seem to think,  
And down it goes with a nod and a wink,  
"Not half bad, d'ye see?"

## THE TRENCHES

For, oh, they're so gay in the trenches!

Wherever you bend to hear,

The British laugh and the light French chaff

Fall merrily on the ear.

With pain for their mate and death for their  
neighbor,

By day and by night they laugh and labor,

And blade and rifle are pipe and tabor

To these lads here.

But it's cold, it's cold in the trenches

At this time o' the year:

It's bitter cold in the trenches,

And Christmas is drawing near.

Oh, think of the gallant boys who fight,

For their country's life and their country's  
right,

And give them a spark of your Christmas light,

A touch of your Christmas cheer!

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## OUR MOURNING

(“A band of purple on the arm.”)

AND if your glorious boy must fall,  
His face to the foe,  
Mother, O Mother, never shroud  
Your form in weeds of woe!  
Oh, never dim the daylight,  
Nor let the watchers say,  
“Columbia’s women mourn their dead  
In hopelessness today!”

But bind around your arm  
For all the world to see,  
The purple, the purple  
Of goodly Victory!

The boy went singing forth,  
His head held high:  
The smile of him was like a torch  
I’ th’ hand of Liberty.

## OUR MOURNING

The song of him was like a bird  
That wakes the morn :  
Sister, O Sister, sing you too,  
Howe'er your heart be torn !

And bind upon your arm,  
For all the world to see,  
The purple, the purple  
Of radiant Victory !

Spring is the time of flowers,  
Of joy, of birth,  
With mothers singing o'er their babes  
Through all the dreaming earth :  
But oh ! the flower of grief  
It blooms in winter fair :  
Once it was white, but now it shines  
In purple rare.

Then bind we round our arms  
For all the world to see,  
The purple, the purple  
Of royal Victory !

## THE WAR MOTHER ON CHRISTMAS EVE

BABY Jesus slept in a manger, —

Yes! but it was warm!

Homely rafters, cobweb-clouded,

Sheltered it from harm.

Mary Mother brooded o'er him;

Who so glad as she?

Bowed her head and prayed before him,

Proud as proud could be.

Baby Jesus heard the angels

Singing in a row;

Hand in hand about the stable

Curtsying full low.

Mary Mother joyed to hear them,

Spoke them sweet and low;

Clapped her hands and laughed to cheer them

With her lovely show.

## THE WAR MOTHER ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Ah, my son! no friendly hovel  
Spreads o'er you its roof.  
Ah, my son! no golden angels  
Sing for your behoof.  
But my thoughts go questing, flying,  
To the corner where  
You this Christmas Eve are lying,  
Find and greet you there.

Could the little thoughts but warm you,  
O my soldier boy,  
How I'd tuck them in around you,  
Laughing low for joy!  
Low, ah! low! I must not wake you;  
Just a whisper, dear!  
"Merry Christmas!" "Merry Christmas!"  
In your dreaming ear.

Could the little thoughts but warm you!  
Now comes on the Day;  
So I fold them close about you,  
Softly steal away.

## **THE WAR MOTHER ON CHRISTMAS EVE**

**Ah! he turns upon his pallet.**

**Ah! he's smiling, see!**

**So shall it be Merry Christmas**

**Also here for me.**

## **HELP!**

**YE** who sleep peacefully  
In quiet homes,  
Where no disaster broods,  
No terror comes,  
Against the hour of doom,  
The day of loss,  
Now in this Christmastide,  
Help the Red Cross!

**YE** who tread joyously  
Through flowery ways,  
Laughter and song to fill  
The long bright days,  
For those on beds of pain  
Who moan and toss,  
Now in this Christmastide,  
Help the Red Cross!



## **HELP!**

**Beggar and priest and king,  
For all alike  
In the appointed hour  
God's clock doth strike.  
Round the world, o'er the sea,  
Join hands across!  
Now, when Christ comes to ye,  
Help the Red Cross!**

## THE RED CROSS

O Cross of Christ, red gleaming,  
Where blood and tears are streaming,  
Where the wild shells are crashing,  
Where the bright swords are flashing,  
What means thy dreadful splendor?  
Death's triumph, Life's surrender,  
O Cross of Christ?

O Cross of Christ, high lifting,  
Where battle-clouds are drifting,  
Where the red field a-welter,  
No succor yields nor shelter,  
What sign for those who, stricken,  
Gaze where thy flame doth quicken,  
O Cross of Christ?

O Cross of Christ, low bending  
Where anxious care is tending,

## **THE RED CROSS**

**Here in the trenches groaning,  
Here on the pallet moaning,  
These bleeding, broken, dying,  
What answer to our crying,  
O Cross of Christ?**

**O Cross of Christ, thy shining  
Rebukes our vain repining.  
'Tis love doth bear thee onward,  
'Tis pity lifts thee sunward,  
Read we aright thy splendor,  
Life's triumph, Death's surrender,  
O Cross of Christ!**

**THE END.**



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